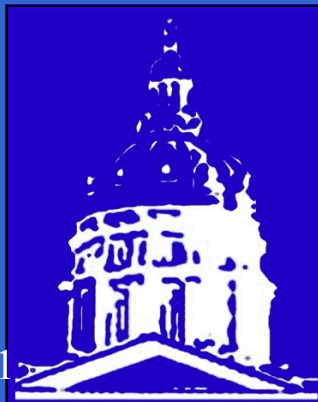


2010-2011  
Newsletter



# IOWA Youth Congress



The Iowa Youth Congress reaches out through regional meetings to teach students about developing policy issues from grassroots ideas, collaborating across diverse populations and contributing to public life. “Congress members” represent 31 high schools statewide and hold a mock General Assembly in the Iowa House Chambers. These leaders prioritized issues from previous regional meetings,



introduced and debated bills. Four bills were selected by the IYC and have been recommended to legislators to be introduced as actual bills in the 84th General Assembly, which convened January 10, 2011.







# Iowa Youth Congress

Rockwell  
Collins

# House Chambers Session



In the 2010-2011 Iowa Youth Congress General Assembly, there were 82 representatives from 31 high schools from across the state who participated. This years session was held on Friday, November 12, 2010.

To kickoff the 5th Annual I.Y.C. session, the Department of Human Rights Director, Preston Daniels provided the welcoming speech with encouraging words on being future leaders. To jump start the day, students elected their officers and then shortly after broke into committees to discuss this years proposals that had been passed on from the regional meetings. This years committees were: Higher Education, K-12 Education, Public Safety, and Health/Environment. That afternoon, the representatives reconvened in the Iowa House Chambers to discuss and debate the bills that passed out of the 4 committees.



# 2010-2011 Officers



**President: Aditi Dinakar, Johnston Middle School**

I am so glad that I was a part of the Iowa Youth Congress this year. First off, it is an honor to be voted as this year's President and I am very thankful! This experience has helped me make a lot of friends and allowed me to meet new and interesting people. I had a great time discussing and debating the various bills and that alone has helped me a lot. This impacted me in the way that I now know how to respect other's opinions and how to present my views in the best way. I learned about our legislative process, which will help me in the future! I am so grateful that this opportunity has been presented to me and I had so much fun. I look forward to being a part of this for years to come!



**Vice-President: Kensie Channon, DM East High School**

I have been involved with this program for three years and this experience has been very neat! For two straight years, I was elected as the Chairperson for Region B. This year I decided I wanted to do more than be the chairperson, so I decided to run for Vice-President, and I did it. I got one of my bills to pass by the entire Congress as one of the top 4 and it made me feel more confident. Every year during the IYC, I become more comfortable and get myself "out of the box." The youngsters in the future should join the IYC and do the work for us. I love being the Vice-President and it was a pleasure to be the first deaf person on the ballot. The Iowa Youth Congress is a great program for young kids who are interested in politics and helping out their community!



**Secretary: Waale Gbara, Iowa City West High School**

The 5th Annual Iowa Youth Congress was a great experience for me. I'm so glad that I was able to be a part of such a wonderful opportunity. I've gained valuable knowledge about how our government works and was able to meet such a diverse group of peers that are seeking a brighter and better future. For them to vote for me as the secretary means a lot. Being elected as Secretary of the Iowa Youth Congress has made me grow in pride and confidence. It has instilled in me a new responsibility to serve my position to the best of my abilities and carry on the wonderful tradition of leadership that it entails.



**Treasurer: Lilliane Iragena, DM Roosevelt High School**

My experience with the Iowa Youth Congress is one of the events in my life that I will never forget. I got to meet a lot of people and I also met former members who have graduated. Being an elected member of the IYC definitely got me out of my comfort zone. I was given a chance to speak my mind and to also speak for the people who were not present. I learned that the House of Representatives is important for our state and I appreciate the work they are doing.

## Region Chairs

**Region A (Western Iowa) -**

**Josh Olvera**

**Region B (Central Iowa) -**

**Nayasha Madhan**

**Region C (North & Southeastern Iowa) -**

**Erin Manfull**

**Region D (Eastern Iowa) -**

**Natalie Nungaray**

**Region E (North Central Iowa) -**

**Jasmin Ramirez**



L to R Regional Chairs: Olvera, Madham, Nungaray, Manfull, Ramirez





# Iowa Youth Congress

## Passed Bills



At this years IYC session, 4 bills passed in the House Chambers: the Already American Act (similar to the D.R.E.A.M. Act), the Bottle Bill (beverage deposit for all water and sport drink bottles), AP Programs (available online to both suburb and rural areas), and the Closed Captioning Bill (for all educational materials in the classroom setting). These bills were four of the eight that were presented and passed out of the committees earlier that morning. During the session students listened to arguments from all sides on why these bills should or should not be passed, as well as what changes would need to be made to the bills in order for them to be passed by the state legislature.



# 4th Annual Dream Forward Dinner



On Friday evening, November 12, 2010, the IYC held their 4th Annual Dream Forward Dinner. Students gathered after a long day of debating to recognize the work they did and to celebrate the success of the program. The Congress was welcomed by the Deputy Director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights, Kathryn Baumann-Reese. They also listened to the advice of the Keynote Speaker, Sukriti Nayar, IYC's 1st President. Awards were presented to this year's sponsors and chaperones. A special recognition was given to Dave Thede who has helped recruit and chaperone for all five years of the program. The current and former leadership of the IYC was recognized and presented with certificates from Governor Chester Culver. Following the dinner, the IYC members continued to celebrate by enjoying a dance with entertainment services provided by DJ Julian Jules.



## Keynote Speaker Sukriti Nayar



Sukriti Nayar was the 1st President of the IYC and is currently a Junior at the University of Iowa. Originally from India, Nayar grew up in South Africa until moving to West Des Moines with her parents. During her keynote address Ms. Nayar encouraged the audience to know yourself as well as your own culture and where you come from. "If you can understand yourself, it will help you to understand others." She ended her speech prompting all participants to get involved in their communities and to work with others.



Dave Thede receiving a special recognition for his 5 years of participation and assistance during the Iowa Youth Congress.



# Planning Session



On Saturday, November 13, 2010 the IYC members gathered at the Des Moines Catholic Diocese to take part in the annual planning session. The Congress was welcomed by Representative Phyllis Thede. They were then given tips on speaking to legislators by Ellie Moore, a professor at William Penn University. Members were then put into small groups to try and persuade their chaperones/adult advocates to support their bills. From these small groups, students learned why or why not their bill would be considered and determined how to get their talking points across, to gain support on their four bills.



# Regional Meetings

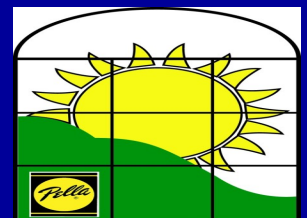


Each Saturday in October, regional meetings were held across the state for Congress members to participate in discussions and training. This years regional meetings were held at DMACC Urban Campus, Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids and via conference call. Members discussed concerns that were taking place in their local communities across the state. While some of the bills were controversial, the members continued to respect each others opinions and held a meaningful conversation with an open dialogue. Several of the proposed bills from the regional meetings were: changes to the Healthy Kids Act, confidentiality laws when media reports incidences including minors, revision of the DUI law and many more.



## Lobbying

On March 7th, several IYC members came to the Capitol to lobby the Legislature. During the day the members were able to participate in Deaf Education Day and took a tour of the Senate. They were able to speak with Senator Sodder about issues the youth face, and were able to learn more about the differences between the House and Senate. Even though the time to lobby was cut short because of both houses being in Caucus they had a great day on the Hill.



# Get involved!

For information about participating in the program,  
nominating a student, volunteering, or becoming a sponsor for  
the Iowa Youth Congress, contact the:

Office of Latino Affairs  
Iowa Department of Human Rights  
515-281-4080 or 515-725-2834  
[www.lationoaffairs.iowa.gov](http://www.lationoaffairs.iowa.gov)  
<http://iyc.lationoaffairs.iowa.gov>

## Special Thanks To Our 2010 Sponsors

